

SENATE, No. 248

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2022 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Senator SANDRA B. CUNNINGHAM
District 31 (Hudson)
Senator NELLIE POU
District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes pilot program in DOE to support establishment of criminal justice career academies in public high schools.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Education Committee with technical review.



1 **AN ACT** establishing a criminal justice career academy pilot
2 program in the Department of Education.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

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7 1. The Commissioner of Education shall establish a five-year
8 pilot program to provide support to school districts in developing
9 and establishing criminal justice career academy programs in high
10 schools within the districts that have partnered with a county
11 college to participate in an early college program. The purpose of
12 the pilot program shall be to afford high school students the
13 opportunity to earn college credit and access hands-on learning
14 experiences in the fields of criminal justice and law enforcement.
15 The purpose of the pilot program shall also be to ensure that
16 participating students are able to cultivate a deeper understanding of
17 career pathways in criminal justice and law enforcement and to
18 attract a more diverse group of applicants who are representative of
19 their community to local law enforcement agencies.

20

21 2. A school district seeking to participate in the pilot program
22 shall submit an application to the commissioner. The application
23 shall demonstrate that high schools within the districts have
24 partnered with a county college to participate in an early college
25 program and that students participating in the pilot program will be
26 able to earn college credits as a result of the coursework completed
27 through the criminal justice career academy. The application shall
28 also identify the high school or high schools within the district in
29 which the criminal justice career academy will be established. As
30 appropriate, the application shall demonstrate that the criminal
31 justice career academy program meets all applicable State Board of
32 Education regulations and standards and other Department of
33 Education requirements for career and technical education programs
34 or programs of study and the New Jersey Student Learning
35 Standards. The application shall include:

36 a. a detailed plan outlining the coursework that will be
37 completed by a student participating in the criminal justice career
38 academy;

39 b. details on the existing partnerships with county colleges to
40 provide college-level courses in criminal justice to academy
41 students or any agreements with appropriate county colleges to
42 accept a certain number of college credits for coursework
43 completed in the career academy;

44 c. details on any partnerships formed with local law
45 enforcement agencies or community organizations;

46 d. the student application process and any student eligibility
47 criteria required for participation in the career academy;

1 e. a description of the hands-on student learning experiences
2 that will be incorporated into the career academy coursework;

3 f. a plan for the continuation of the career academy upon the
4 expiration of the pilot program established pursuant to this act;

5 g. information on the amount of State grant funds needed to
6 support the establishment of the criminal justice career academy
7 and the intended uses of those funds; and

8 h. any other information deemed necessary by the
9 commissioner.

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11 3. a. Upon review of the applications submitted pursuant to
12 section 2 of this act, the commissioner shall select at least one
13 school district in each county which has at least one municipality
14 with a resident population of over 75,000 individuals according to
15 the most recent federal decennial census. In making the selections,
16 the commissioner shall consult with the Attorney General and the
17 Superintendent of State Police to prioritize school districts that
18 demonstrate a need to diversify the law enforcement agencies of the
19 county or municipality in which the school district is situate.

20 b. The commissioner shall provide such guidance, support, and
21 training to selected school districts as may be necessary to establish
22 the criminal justice career academies.

23 c. The commissioner shall award grants, within the limit of
24 available State appropriations, to selected school districts to be used
25 to support the development and implementation of the criminal
26 justice career academies. The commissioner shall determine the
27 amount of each grant awarded under the pilot program and may
28 award multi-year grants.

29
30 4. a. A school district selected to participate in the pilot
31 program shall, at intervals to be determined by the commissioner,
32 prepare and submit to the commissioner reports on the district's
33 experience with and the effects of the pilot program. The reports
34 shall include, but need not be limited to:

35 (1) the high schools in the district that established criminal
36 justice career academies under the pilot program;

37 (2) the number of students enrolled in the district's criminal
38 justice career academies;

39 (3) a description of the academy coursework requirements;

40 (4) the number of college credits, certifications, and credentials
41 earned by students through academy coursework;

42 (5) the use of State grant funds provided to the school district
43 under the pilot program; and

44 (6) information on student outcomes including, but not limited
45 to, academic performance indicators and postsecondary and
46 employment opportunities sought by graduates of the career
47 academy.

1 b. At the conclusion of the pilot program, the commissioner
2 shall submit a report to the Governor, and to the Legislature
3 pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), on the
4 implementation and effectiveness of the pilot program. The report
5 shall include, but need not be limited to, a summary of the
6 information submitted by school districts pursuant to subsection a.
7 of this section and the commissioner's recommendation on the
8 feasibility of continuing and expanding the pilot program.

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10 5. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to
11 the first full school year following the date of enactment.